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ABERCARN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

WELSH BOARD OF HEALTH

6-JAN-1943

A.1.

Annual Report

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

AND

SANITARY INSPECTOR

for the Year 1941

41

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for 1941. As directed by the Ministry, it has been considerably curtailed whilst retaining essential statistics and information.

STATISTICS OF THE DISTRICT.

Area ...	...	9,543 Acres
Inhabited Houses :	1939	4,478
	1940	4,495
	1941	4,495
Rateable Value :	1939	£71,506
	1940	£70,711
	1941	£69,776
Product of Penny Rate :	1939 ...	£252 8s. 11d.
	1940 ...	£249 11s. 4d.
	1941 ...	£252 6s. 0d.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

Work at the Tinplate Mills ceased during the year, and only the finishing department remained at work.

Employment was found for the mill workers in other industries in the county. Many young men and women have joined H.M. Services. Although many of our evacuees have left the district, the wives of many of the Service men have returned to live with their parents; this has caused some difficulty with regard to finding accommodation for children.

BIRTHS.

Live Births—				1941	1940	1939	1938
Legitimate	...	...	...	310	323	268	287
Illegitimate	...	...	...	9	10	11	11
Total ...				319	333	279	298
Male ...				178	173	145	153
Female ...				141	160	134	145
Total ...				319	333	279	298

Live Birth Rate—

Abercarn	15.2	18.36	15.21	16.09
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Stillbirths—

Legitimate	11	15	8	18
Illegitimate	—	1	—	—
Total ...				11	16	8	18

Stillbirth Rate per 1,000 of the population—

Abercarn	0.61	0.88	0.43	0.97
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DEATHS.

				1941	1940	1939	1938
Males	125	155	124	126
Females	83	119	93	99
Total ...				208	274	217	225

Death Rate per 1,000 of the population—

Abercarn	11.2	15.11	11.84	12.15
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The late Dr. EDWARD MEREDITH GRIFFITH, M.D., J.P.,
Medical Officer of Health, Abercarn Urban District Council,
1914-1941.

CAUSES OF DEATH DURING 1941

1940	ALL CAUSES						M. 125	F 83
5	1	Cerebro Spinal Meningitis	...	...	...	...	—	1
—	2	Enteritis	...	...	...	...	1	—
1	3	Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	1	1
14	4	Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	5	2
5	5	Other forms of Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	2	—
1	6	Syphilitic	...	...	...	...	—	—
8	7	Influenza	...	...	...	...	—	—
1	8	Measles	...	...	...	...	—	—
4	9	Cancer of B. Cav. and Esoph (M), Uterus (F)...	...	...	...	...	—	2
6	10	Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum	...	...	...	...	4	1
1	11	Cancer of Breast	...	...	...	...	—	2
8	12	Cancer of all other Sites	...	...	...	...	2	4
2	13	Diabetes	...	...	...	...	1	1
20	14	Intra. Cran. Vasc. Lesions	...	...	...	...	—	—
57	15	Heart Disease	...	...	...	...	39	37
10	16	Other Diseases of Circulatory System	...	...	...	...	9	4
28	17	Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	—	3
20	18	Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	18	6
5	19	Other Respiratory Diseases	...	...	...	...	2	3
3	20	Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum	...	...	...	...	—	—
2	21	Diarrhœa (under 2 years)	...	...	...	...	1	—
9	22	Other Digestive Diseases	...	...	...	...	4	—
4	23	Nephritis	...	...	...	...	1	4
—	24	Puerperal and Post-Abort. Sepsis	...	...	...	...	—	—
8	25	Premature Birth	...	...	...	...	2	4
11	26	Con. Mal. Birth Inj. Infant Dis.	...	...	...	...	—	—
—	27	Suicide	...	...	...	...	3	—
2	28	Road Traffic Accidents	...	...	...	...	4	—
8	29	Other Violent Causes	...	...	...	...	10	3
37	30	All Other Causes	...	...	...	...	16	5

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

Number of deaths under one year:

	1941	1940	1939	1938
Boys	14	20	11	11
Girls	8	17	9	2

Number of Live Births:

	1941	1940	1939	1938
	319	333	279	298

The causes of infant deaths, at various ages, are as shewn below :—

	Weeks.					Months.				
	1	2	3	4	Total	3	6	9	12	Total
Premature Birth ...	4	—	1	—	5	—	—	—	—	—
Debility	2	—	2	—	4	1	1	—	—	2
Bronchitis	—	—	—	—	—	1	2	1	—	4
Pneumonia	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	2	1	3
Convulsions	—	1	—	1	2	1	—	—	—	1
	6	1	3	2	12	3	3	3	1	10

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS.

Medical Officer of Health (part time): J. Dunlop, MB., F.R.C.S. (Ed.)
Sanitary Inspector: Ivor Jenkins, M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supply.

An adequate supply of good water is maintained throughout the year by the Abertillery and District Water Board. Only a very few outlying farms and houses have to rely on spring water and wells.

Drainage and Sewerage.

Sewers and Drains are regularly inspected and defects in both are dealt with as quickly as possible. Continual trouble occurred in the Crumlin Area, this being due to subsidence.

Rainfall.

Recorded at the Abercarn Cemetery. Height above sea level 592.9 feet.

	1941	1940	1939	1938
Total depth ...	50.62	53.91	61.82	55.37

Scavenging and Salvage.

Prior to 1939 the Scavenging Services were dealt with by two Contractors fairly satisfactorily, but during 1941, primarily due to war conditions, serious and indiscriminate tipping of household refuse in unauthorised spots have increased considerably.

Numerous visits have been paid to householders by the Sanitary Inspector, and circulars have been distributed to houses in the districts concerned.

The collection of Salvage, whilst not 100% efficient, was carried out as satisfactory as possible within the limitations of the present system of collection.

Rat Destruction.

In view of the destruction of Food Stuffs by Rats, Mr. Rees has concentrated his attention upon the breeding places of these pests, and he has succeeded in keeping the Rat infestation within manageable numbers.

Mining Subsidence.

There was some slight movement in the Crumlin Area and one unoccupied house was demolished. Although some houses in that part of the Area are seriously affected (continual watch is being kept upon them) none are actually dangerous.

Evacuation.

The number of Evacuees, both adult and children, declined during the year. The general health of the Evacuees has shown improvement since they have been in the Council's area. The problem with the children has been various skin diseases (Scabies, Impetigo, etc.), which has been prevalent amongst them. By the end of the year there was a slight decrease in the number of cases which were brought to our notice. Abercarn House has proved very useful as a clearing home for many cases where children have become difficult to keep in billets.

HOUSING.

Repairs have been difficult to deal with owing to labour and material shortage, but with the co-operation of owners quite a large number of houses have received substantial repairs.

The tabulated figures will show the number of houses dealt with. Owing to the migration of the population from vulnerable areas, and no new building of houses, overcrowding increased during the year to some extent, but the position at the present time is in my opinion not alarming. What will occur after the war depends to a large extent upon unforeseen circumstances.

Number of houses erected during the year :—

By the Council	Nil
By private enterprise	Nil

The following statement is in the form prescribed by the Ministry :—

1.—Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the Year :—

(1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	191
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ...	237
(2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 and 1932	Nil
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ...	Nil
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	Nil
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	168

2.—Remedy of Defects during the Year without Service of Formal Notices :—

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	29
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3.—Action under Statutory Powers during the Year :—

(a) Proceedings under sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936 :

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	131
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(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—

(a) By owners	...	...	...	...	...	30
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners	...	...	...	...	...	1

(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts :

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ... Nil

(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—

(a) By owners ... 19

(b) By Local Authority in default of owners ... Nil

(c) Proceedings under sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936 :

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made ... Nil

(2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders ... 3

(d) Proceedings under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936 :

(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made ... 1

(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit ... 1

4.—Housing Act, 1936—Part IV—Overcrowding :—

(a) (i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year ... 24

(ii) Number of families dwelling therein ... 29

(iii) Number of persons dwelling therein ... 186

(b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year ... 6

(c) (i) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year ... 2

(ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases ... 14

(d) Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding ... Nil

INSPECTION OF MEAT.

Carcases Inspected and Condemned.

Number Killed.

Emergency owing to accident—two cows, both affected with generalised tuberculosis.

All meat is now delivered to the Council's Area from the slaughtering dépôt at Brynmawr.

From carcasses received from the dépôt 145 lbs. hindquarter of Argentine chilled beef was condemned as being unfit owing to its being affected with mould, also 250 lbs. of chilled beef with bone taint.

One carcase of lamb (17 lbs.) was condemned as being immature.

Unsound Food.

During 1941 the following was condemned as being unfit for human consumption :—

293	Sheep and Pigs Offals.
36 lb.	Press Beef.
35 lb.	Brawn.
47 lb.	Bacon.
15 tins	Soup (blown).
144 tins	Stewed Steak.
109 tins	Condensed Milk.
6 lb.	Butter (returned from processing).
12 dozen	Eggs.
140 lb.	Farina Sausage Meat.
29 lb.	Margarine.
24 packets	Shredded Wheat.

FRIED FISH SHOPS

These shops are regularly inspected for cleanliness by the Sanitary Inspector. In two cases the Inspector found cause to warn the shopkeeper, and improvement resulted.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Milk Supply.

Retail Purveyors	...	...	...	...	...	68
Wholesale Purveyors	...	...	...	...	...	14

Farms, Cowsheds, and Dairies are regularly visited by the Sanitary Inspector, and roadside milk samples are taken for examination at the County Laboratory.

Bakehouses.

All the Bakehouses in the area are inspected during the year, and in a few cases some minor defects were remedied upon the Inspector's suggestions.

Slaughterhouses.

Registered Slaughterhouses	...	...	...	6
Licensed Slaughterhouses	...	...	...	1

Slaughterhouses are not now in use except for the occasional slaughter of pigs for cottagers who obtain a permit from the Ministry of Food.

Licensed Slaughtermen.

Nineteen persons were licensed to act as slaughtermen during the year.

ICE CREAM SHOPS.

Owing to the Order prohibiting the use of milk in the manufacture of ice cream the sale of the article has considerably decreased. Nevertheless supervision of premises where it is manufactured is still maintained.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

We were remarkably free from serious epidemic diseases during the year, although there was a slight increase in the number of diphtheria notifications; this is probably due in some degree to the increase of the child population owing to evacuation. The cases were mostly of a mild type and only in one case had the child received immunisation treatment, and in this case the infection occurred before the serum had taken effect.

There was an epidemic of measles of a very mild type in the early months—this has now completely subsided.

Notifiable Diseases During 1940.

1940	Diseases	Total Cases Notified	Total Admitted Hospital	Total Deaths
—	Smallpox	—	—	—
24	Scarlet Fever	27	1	—
19	Diphtheria	27	14	—
—	Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid)	—	—	—
3	Puerperal Fever	—	—	—
8	Pneumonia	41	—	24

Notifiable Diseases—Continued :

1940	Diseases	Total Cases Notified	Total Admitted Hospital	Total Deaths
2	Pneumonia Influenza ...	—	—	—
33	Tuberculosis ...	22	—	11
1	Erysipelas ...	—	—	—
—	Enceph. Lethargica ...	—	—	—
5	Cerebro Spinal Fever ...	6	8	1
—	Ophthalmia Neonatorum ...	—	—	—
—	Chicken Pox ...	14	—	—
315	Measles ...	271	—	—
—	Whooping Cough ...	20	—	—
—	Acute Poliomyelitis ...	—	—	—
2	Meningitis ...	—	—	—
		414	23	36
	1939 ...	68	24	36
	1940 ...	410	37	46

DIPHTHERIA PROPHYLAXIS.

During the year the Council offered a free service of Immunisation against Diphtheria to all children whose parents were willing to sign the Form of Consent. Out of 3,442 children attending the schools in the Council's area 1,804 took advantage of the service offered. It is hoped that if the services are continued a 100% response will result in consequence of success achieved in the cases of children who have escaped the attack of the disease once they have received the treatment. It will be noted that no fatal cases occurred during the winter of 1941 although the weather conditions were conducive to render children prone to attack.

Very careful records are kept in order that a true picture of the results of the immunisation service will be presented over a period of several years.

I would like to express my appreciation of the valuable assistance rendered by Head Teachers and their Staff in obtaining such a good response to the first appeal, and for their efforts in overcoming some of the objections which were made by the parents.

Analysis of Cases Notified—In Age Groups.

	Under 1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-35	35-45	45-65	65	Total
Diphtheria ...	—	—	—	1	1	10	9	4	2	—	—	—	27
Scarlet Fever ...	—	—	5	4	3	6	6	3	—	—	—	—	27
Enteric Fever ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pneumonia ...	8	3	6	1	1	2	1	—	5	1	10	3	41
Puerperal Fever ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cerebro Spinal Fever ...	1	—	—	—	2	1	1	—	1	—	—	—	6
Acute Poliomyelitis ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Enceph. Lethargica ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dysentery ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorium ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Erysipelas ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Measles ...	13	30	40	35	47	98	4	2	2	—	—	—	271
Meningitis ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tuberculosis ...	—	1	—	—	—	2	2	6	—	8	3	—	22
Whooping Cough ...	—	1	3	1	9	5	1	—	—	—	—	—	20
Chicken Pox ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	6	3	—	—	—	14
Total ...	22	35	54	42	61	125	29	22	12	10	13	3	428
1940 ...	11	28	32	36	57	191	17	6	22	5	5	—	410
1939 ...	1	1	—	2	6	19	5	8	18	3	3	2	68

NUMBER OF CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFIED DURING PAST FOUR YEARS.

	1941	1940	1939	1938
Small Pox ...	—	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever ...	27	24	16	78
Diphtheria ...	27	19	16	32
Enteric Fever ...	—	—	—	—
Puerperal Sepsis ...	—	3	—	1
Pneumonia ...	41	8	7	16
Meningitis ...	—	2	—	—
Measles ...	271	315	2	—
Tuberculosis ...	21	33	21	13
Erysipelas ...	—	1	1	—
Enceph. Lethargica ...	—	—	—	—
Cerebro Spinal Fever ...	6	5	5	2
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ...	—	—	—	—
Para-Typhoid ...	—	—	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis ...	—	—	—	—
Whooping Cough ...	20	—	—	—
Chicken Pox ...	14	—	—	—
Total ...	414	410	68	143

TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Mortality in 1941.

Age Periods	New Cases				Deaths.			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
5	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
10	1	—	1	—	2	—	—	—
20	2	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
25	—	2	—	—	—	3	—	—
35	1	6	—	—	—	—	—	—
45	1	2	—	—	3	1	1	—
Totals ...	6	13	2	1	5	4	1	—
1940	11	10	9	3	6	8	4	1
1939	7	9	2	3	5	4	1	1

SUMMARY.

			1941	1940	1939	1938
New Cases ...	...	...	22	33	21	13
Death ...	...	...	11	19	11	9

All cases are examined at the Tuberculosis Clinic of the Welsh National Memorial Association and as many as can be arranged for are sent away to one or other of the Association's Sanatoria. Disinfection is carried out by the Sanitary Inspector whenever necessary.

ACUTE RESPIRATORY DISEASES. DEATHS.

			1941	1940	1939	1938
Bronchitis ...	...	...	3	28	17	15
Pneumonia ...	...	...	18	20	22	11
Other Forms ...	...	...	5	5	5	7
Total Deaths ...	...	...	26	53	44	39
Death Rate ...	...	...	1.44	2.92	2.40	2.10

CANCER. DEATHS.

			1941	1940	1939	1938
Males	...	...	6	7	9	11
Females	...	...	9	4	10	6
			—	—	—	—
			15	11	19	19
			—	—	—	—

Scarlet Fever.

Twenty-seven cases were notified during the year compared with 24 cases in 1940. All cases were of a mild type and were distributed throughout the area.

Measles.

There was an epidemic of Measles during the latter part of 1940 and the early months of 1941, the cases were all of a mild type and in a very few cases only complication ensued. Only one case terminated fatally.

Diphtheria

Cases notified were :—

			1941	1940	1939
South Ward	...	...	4	—	5
East Ward	...	...	5	3	1
West Ward	...	...	2	2	—
Central Ward	...	...	8	3	4
Torlais Ward	...	...	5	1	—
North Ward	...	...	3	8	6
			—	—	—
			27	17	16
			—	—	—
Deaths	...	...	—	1	—
			—	—	—

Cerebro Spinal Fever.

Eight cases were notified, an increase of three over 1940. One case was fatal.

Cases notified :—

South Ward	...	...	...	2
East Ward	...	...	...	2
West Ward	...	...	...	—
Central Ward	...	...	...	—
Torlais Ward	...	...	...	1
North Ward	...	...	...	1

J. DUNLOP, M.B., F.R.C.S. (Ed.),

Medical Officer of Health.

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT.

Housing.

Repairs are systematically supervised and a careful inspection of suspected premises is made, and all complaints are promptly attended to, although in some cases it has been found difficult to get the owners to carry out their obligations. Most cases are dealt with without the necessity of reporting the matter to the Council for Statutory action.

Overcrowding.

There has been some increase in overcrowding owing to war conditions, but the trouble is being kept in view all the time and when an opportunity occurs steps are taken to remedy the worst cases.

Milk and Dairies Orders.

Very few complaints were made during the year. Inspections are made regularly and suggestions are put to the occupiers for improvements. In one instance, extensive repairs were carried out, and the cowshed is now in a satisfactory condition.

Scavenging and Salvage.

There has been some serious complaints during the year due chiefly to the shortage of receptacles owing to war conditions. Appeals have been made to householders and personal visits paid in the affected districts. Dirty accommodation roads have been cleaned up.

Rats and Mice Destruction Acts.

Rats and Mice are dealt with successfully by Mr. C. Rees, who attends to all Council property, sewers and drains. All other premises are the responsibility of the occupiers and Mr. Rees attends to these as soon as complaints are received.

Shops Acts, 1912—1938.

The shops in the Council' Area all close much earlier than in former years, and there has been no cause for complaints with regard to assistants being kept working excessive hours.

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

The tables contained in the Medical Officer's section contains information as to the amount of food condemned during the year. Owing to war conditions extra care has to be taken to ensure that no food that can be treated by processing is wasted, and when this can be done it is returned to the factories, where it is manufactured into food for animals, etc.

It will be noted that only a small amount of imported meat was found to be unfit for human consumption. In two cases where cows had to be slaughtered locally owing to accidents, they were found to be affected with tuberculosis, and all had to be destroyed.

I. JENKINS,

Sanitary Inspector.